

26 June 2023

Private Hospitals and Medical Clinics Act (PHMCA) Licensees

## IMMUNITY AGAINST MEASLES AND DIPHTHERIA FOR PERSONNEL IN HEALTHCARE INSTITUTIONS

On 3 January 2022, the Director-General of Health (“**DGH**”) (then referred to as the Director of Medical Services) issued a set of Licensing Terms and Conditions under the Private Hospitals and Medical Clinics Act 1980 (“**PHMCA**”) that set out the requirements for licensees to ensure that certain persons working in their healthcare institutions have immunity against measles and diphtheria (“**Immunity LTCs**”). The intention of the Immunity LTCs is to ensure that these persons do not inadvertently become conduits for the spread of such diseases to the patients or other healthcare workers.

### Update to the Immunity LTCs

2. In exercise of DGH’s powers under section 6(5) of the PHMCA, the Immunity LTCs will be amended and superseded with the LTCs set out in **Annex A** (the “**Updated LTCs**”), with effect from 26 June 2023.

3. In the Updated LTCs, licensees are required to ensure that volunteers who are healthcare professionals<sup>1</sup> have immunity against measles and diphtheria. For

<sup>1</sup> “healthcare professional” means —

- (a) an allied health professional who is registered under the Allied Health Professions Act 2011 and holds a valid practising certificate under that Act;
- (b) a dentist or an oral health therapist who is registered under the Dental Registration Act 1999 and holds a valid practising certificate under that Act;
- (c) a medical practitioner who is registered under the Medical Registration Act 1997 and holds a valid practising certificate under that Act;
- (d) a nurse or midwife who is registered, or an enrolled nurse who is enrolled, under the Nurses and Midwives Act 1999 and holds a valid practising certificate under that Act;
- (e) an optometrist or optician who is registered under the Optometrists and Opticians Act 2007 and holds a valid practising certificate under that Act;

volunteers who are not healthcare professionals, licensees are still strongly encouraged to ensure that they meet the immunity requirements as best practice. This is a calibrated public health approach taken to encourage volunteerism in all PHMCA licensed healthcare settings.

4. Licensees should also continue to assess and determine if there are circumstances where the immunity requirements may need to be imposed on volunteers who are not healthcare professionals. This assessment should be risk-calibrated and based on the potential exposure of volunteers with no to unknown immunity to diphtheria and measles to vulnerable patients. Further guidance on how licensees can make such an assessment is also provided by the Ministry of Health (“**MOH**”) in the FAQs set out in **Annex B**.

5. Licensees should reiterate to volunteers that prevailing infection prevention and control measures will continue to apply (e.g., routine cleaning and disinfecting of premises especially following a large group-based activity or event, general public exhortation to keep up-to-date with the necessary vaccinations, hand hygiene, masking in patient-facing areas and avoid visiting the healthcare institutions if unwell).

6. For avoidance of doubt, DGH may re-impose the requirement for licensees to ensure that volunteers who are not healthcare professionals have immunity against measles and diphtheria, if there is an outbreak of such diseases, or if the licensee is at risk of such an outbreak.

7. Should you require further clarification, please send your queries via email to [elis@moh.gov.sg](mailto:elis@moh.gov.sg).

Thank you.

Yours faithfully



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- (f) a pharmacist who is registered under the Pharmacists Registration Act 2007 and holds a valid practising certificate under that Act; or
  - (g) a traditional Chinese medicine practitioner who is registered under the Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners Act 2000 and holds a valid practising certificate under that Act.

## Annexes

Annex A	Licensing Terms and Conditions on Immunity Against Measles and Diphtheria for Personnel in Healthcare Institutions
Annex B	FAQs to accompany Licensing Terms and Conditions on Immunity Against Measles and Diphtheria for Personnel in Healthcare Institutions